

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
ICA-11 OMB-01 EB-08 AID-05 /091 W
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R 080700Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8449
INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
CINCPAC
CINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L KABUL 4649

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS, AF, US
SUBJECT: CONVERSATION WITH THE AFGHAN MINISTER OF DEFENSE

PASS DOD

CINCPAC AND CINCEUR: ALSO FOR POLAD

1. ON JUNE 7, ACCOMPANIED BY COLONEL EDGAR, DEFENSE ATTACHE, I PAID A COURTESY CALL ON COLONEL ABDUL QADER, THE NEW MINISTER OF DEFENSE.
2. DURING THE EXCHANGE OF GREETINGS, COL QADER COMMENTED THAT ALTHOUGH HE WAS VERY BUSY, HE WAS EXPERIENCING NO REAL DIFFICULTIES.
3. WHEN I COMPLIMENTED THE AFGHAN AIR FORCE ON THE SKILL INVOLVED IN THE STRIKES AGAINST THE PALACE ON APRIL 27 (EXCEPT FOR ONE PILOT WHO NARROWLY MISSED THE

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U.S. EMBASSY), COL QADER THAT HE HAD BEEN MOST CONCERNED FOR THE SAFETY OF THE FOREIGN EMBASSIES LOCATED NEAR THE PALACE, AND HE WAS PLEASED THAT, IN SPITE OF THE LACK OF EXPERIENCED PERSONNEL AND A LACK OF PLANNING, THERE HAD BEEN NO DAMAGE EXCEPT TO THE FRENCH EMBASSY. HE ADDED THAT THE MILITARY HAD WANTED TO REMAIN PART OF THE DAOUD GOVERNMENT, BUT WERE FORCED BY DAOUD'S

ACTIONS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE REVOLUTION.

4. WHEN ASKED HOW IT WAS POSSIBLE THAT DAOUD DID NOT KNOW HE (QADER) WOULD END UP OPPOSING HIM, COL QADER REPLIED THAT PRIOR TO THE 1973 COUP HE AND DAOUD HAD BEEN CLOSE FRIENDS AND THAT AFTER THAT COUP HE, (QADER, HAD ENDED UP AS CINC, AIR AND AIR DEFENSE FORCES. FOR UNKNOWN REASONS, HIS RELATIONS WITH DAOUD HAD THEN GROWN LESS CLOSE AND FINALLY HE WAS REMOVED FROM ACTIVE DUTY. HE STATED THAT DAOUD HAD GIVEN WRITTEN PROMISES OF WHAT HE WOULD DO BUT DID NOT KEEP THEM. IN FACT, HE SENT \$100,000 A YEAR TO KING ZAHIR WHICH AFGHANISTAN COULD NOT AFFORD.

5. WHEN ASKED IF HE WAS A MEMBER OF THE PARTY. COL QADER ANSWERED THAT HE HAD THE HONOR TO HAVE BEEN A MEMBER OF THE DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S PARTY FOR 12 YEARS.

6. I THEN DESCRIBED THE THREE PILLARS OF U.S. POLICY IN AFGHANISTAN: SUPPORT FOR AFGHANISTAN INDEPENDENCE, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, AND REGIONAL STABILITY. REGARDING OUR ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS, I SAID WE NEVER HAVE AND NEVER WOULD ATTACH POLITICAL STRINGS. COL QADER RESPONDED THAT AFGHANS HAD ALWAYS LOVED INDEPENDENCE AND WOULD REMAIN INDEPENDENT. AS A POOR NATION, AFGHANISTAN NEEDED ASSISTANCE AND WOULD WELCOME IT TO HELP
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ITS PEOPLE WHO AFTER ALL, WERE THE SAME PEOPLE AS BEFORE. HE ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT AFGHANISTAN WOULD NOT ACCEPT AID FROM ANYONE IF CONDITIONS WERE IMPOSED. COMMENT: IT WAS CLEAR THAT HE WAS TELLING ME THAT "ANYONE" INCLUDED THE SOVIET UNION. END COMMENT. HE ALSO STATED THAT AFGHANISTAN WOULD NOT FOR ITS OWN INTERESTS CREATE PROBLEMS FOR THE REGION.

7. I NEXT DESCRIBED THE U.S. IMET PROGRAM IN AFGHANISTAN, SPECIFICALLY POINTING OUT THAT EIGHT SLOTS REMAINED TO BE FILLED DURING THIS FISCAL YEAR, AND THAT IF THE AFGHANS WERE INTERESTED, COL EDGAR WOULD BE AVAILABLE TO DISCUSS FILLING THEM. I ALSO DESCRIBED OUR REQUIREMENTS FOR ACCESS TO THE MINISTRY OF NATIONAL DEFENSE STAFF, RETURNED STUDENTS, AND FIELD COMMANDERS IN ORDER TO PLAN AND ASSESS THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE TRAINING PROGRAM. COL QADER COMMENTED THAT HE HAD, AS CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE A&ADF, WORKED ON SENDING STUDENTS TO THE U.S. AND RECOGNIZED THE NEED FOR ADVANCE NOTICE OF THE SLOTS AVAILABLE IN ORDER TO PROVIDE ADEQUATE ENGLISH LANGUAGE TRAINING. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH COL QADER DID NOT DIRECTLY EXPRESS GREAT JOY OVER THE SLOTS AVAILABLE, HIS

DISCUSSION OF THE ENGLISH REQUIREMENTS PROBABLY INDICATED HIS DESIRE TO FILL THEM. END COMMENT. I POINTED OUT THAT ALTHOUGH WE COULD NOT MAKE ANY PROMISES ON ANY FY 79 PROGRAM, SINCE CONGRESS STILL HAD TO ACT ON IT, THE AFGHANS SHOULD NOT HOLD UP THEIR ENGLISH TRAINING.

8. COL QADER WAS COMFORTABLY ATTIRED IN OPEN-NECKED SUMMER AIR FORCE UNIFORM, SEEMED IN GOOD HEALTH AND SPIRITS, ALTHOUGH A LITTLE TIRED. HE WAS EXCEEDINGLY CORDIAL THROUGHOUT THE MEETING. THE OFFICE CONTAINED THE USUAL ARRAY OF MODELS OF SOVIET EQUIPMENT, AND A PICTURE OF TARAKI ON THE WALL. SECURITY ON THE SECOND FLOOR WAS TIGHTER THAN IN PRE-COUP DAYS.
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ELIOT

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